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"Let Us go on Unto Perfection."

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The Secret.

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask:
Room to deny ourselves; a road.
To bring us daily nearer to God.
Seek we no more; content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease,
As heaven shall bid them come and go;
The secret this of rest below.—Keele.

Convention Work No. 2.

It is Wednesday afternoon, May 11th, and I have finished EVANGELIST No. 19. I do not care to run my articles any closer than two weeks; there might be a collision, especially after I get on a heavy head of steam. I don't mean to continue on in "such a cold, clammy and God forsaken way, as to almost send a chill to the bone." I'll make it hot enough for the most ardent, before I get through, unless I should strike an iceberg. But you know all heavy trains start up kind of slowly, as it were. It is a little hard for the general reader to tell who is the author of the article from which the above quotation has been taken. If it were not set in different type one might think it was a part of D. White's which had been misplaced.

Brother Mason has undertaken a friendly criticism of my No. 1, and quotes me quite liberally, if not very correctly, which latter is likely the printer's fault, however. He is surprised at my doubting of our having a brotherhood, and he also doubts whether we can come nearer having one, "without violating our gospel-alone resolution." Well, if we can't we will have to give it up; but let us see about that. In Ohio, he says, everything is lovely. Yes, it always was that way in Ohio, especially in the southern part, even back in the days of Peter Nead, Henry Davy and John P. Ebersole; but we can't all live in that favored land.

It seems to me, that if we here at South Bend, (and other churches elsewhere,) can organize a church and take the Gospel as our creed and discipline, and work successfully, having a perfect union upon the "essential gospel principles," and upon the "non-essential minor matters," a brotherhood of such churches might be formed, and governed by the same creed. How is that? Is not this reasonable? We have our officers: elder, pastor, deacon, treasurer, secretary, trustees; we have our stated meetings: every Sunday forenoon at 10:00 for Sunday school, and at 11:00 preaching, and in the evening again, and on Thursday evenings for prayer. We have other meetings for business purposes; we own property and transact business; we have the (legal) privileges of "suing and being sued;" we also have the liberty legal ecclesiastical of teaching and obeying the whole gospel. We make the study of its teachings the special work of our church, in from four to five special public efforts each week, besides the home preparations which such work will require. In doing so, we find all the commandments, and ordinances, and

instructions, and requirements which it contains, and we do them, and so have union. We don't have any trouble about the essentials; and our edition of the creed does not have any non-essentials. I recommend this edition to all the churches. We have "one baptism" for all; (Eph. 4:5) that is one authorized by Christ: Math. 28:19; we have studied the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and in short, (we trust measurably at least) fully established in the doctrine of the Gospel as it has been practiced in the Brethren church since the days of its organization in Germany. Now, then, according the same privilege to all other churches, not only to those in the theological states of Ohio and Indiana, but even to the heterodox commonwealth of Pennsylvania, schismatic Virginia and Maryland, and the nurselings in Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and California, is it impossible or even impracticable, to form a brotherhood of such churches, to be just as fully organized and equipped for work, as is any of the factors of which it is composed? That is my question; hands up. In my humble way of looking at things I believe we can do so, and I would like to see it done. We could then have one college, if we are able and willing to pay for one and to conduct it; one publishing house, issuing literature for all, and disseminating the doctrines and practices of the church which we are trying to build up; and one general organization and fund for the establishing of churches in new fields.

But, it is feared we can not do this "without a violation of our gospel-alone resolution." I have had fears that some brethren are more bound by that "gospel-alone resolution," than they are by the gospel itself. The fact is it was the GOSPEL itself we adopted, and not any resolution, and now we want to know what it teaches, what it commands and what it forbids, and practice what we know. We need more gospel teaching, in our paper in the pulpit, in our conventions, and everywhere else. We must have more doctrine; gospel doctrine, and the whole gospel is doctrine. Our paper should be an exponent of the doctrine of the gospel and practices of the church. Who would suppose by the teaching of our paper that the church it is supposed to represent was the Brethren church? How much would its readers learn of the gospel. peculiarities of our church? The same might be said of the teachings of many pulpits. There is a prevalent criminal ignorance of the teachings of the gospel. We are following the popular current of the day's religion, and shouting the motto of "no creed," and it will not be long until it may be added "and mighty little gospel." Many of the late accessions to the churches, had not been brought up under the teachings of the Brethren church, and had not been educated in the gospel

doctrine and unless they be first taught, they do not know what they are joining. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Not long ago I preached the gospel against swearing, and after service a brother said he had never heard that before. He had sworn "by the Almighty searcher of all hearts;" had unequally yoked himself with unbelievers, with its blasphemous imprecations, because he had not been taught that the gospel forbade it. When the righteous leaves his righteousness and commits iniquity, we fail to warn him, he shall die in his sin, but his blood shall be required at our hands. See Ezek. 3:20. Would to God we could all say with Paul: "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God." Acts 20:26, 27. We might attend the services of most of the sects from Sunday to Sunday, for a life time, and never learn that the gospel discountenanced divorces, war, retaliation, going to law among Christian brethren, extortion, ungodly alliances, and other evils and that it taught baptism for the remission of sins, that baptism was to be performed by an immersing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that the Savior had taught his disciples to wash one another's feet, that the gospel taught the anointing of the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, and commanded the salutation of the holy kiss. These things are in the gospel, and the "whole gospel" part of our motto should bring them to the front, along with "practical charity." There is Daniel White who has evidently never had preached to him the articles of our creed referring to the support of the ministry. Now, what I advocate is the preaching of the Word, in season, out of season, first, last and all the time, and obedience to its teachings. The children of Israel had a golden calf made and worshipped it, before Moses had time to get down off the mountain with the law of the Lord, and some of our brethren are making a young elephant out of the "gospel alone resolution" before they have seen or heard the hundredth part of the word itself. The gospel is our creed, and as long as we do not violate any of its instructions, either by commission or omission we need not be afraid of any other resolution.

Now, brethren, don't you think it would be better to organize into a general brotherhood, into state organizations? If we form states, we will be likely to have a college, and paper, and a mission society for each. The brotherhood could district itself into conferences or synods, for convenience if it thought proper, but all subordinate to the general conference, or whatever we would decide to name it.

Perhaps this is long enough and heavy enough for one train. In my next I will likely make a

motion, unless some one else does. I would like to hear from others, and that promptly. Only eighteen weeks until convention; will give me only nine more essays. It is high time to go to work brethren, and sisters, in good earnest. But let me counsel you again, let us do it calmly and kindly, something after the spirit of brother Mason and I. What's the use in getting mad about it. And let us write over our own proper signatures. I don't like those anonymous scribbles. I rather enjoy an open field and a free fight, but I hate the bushwhackers. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all things be done with charity." 1 Cor. 16:13, 14. Brethren's Creed.

H. R. HOLSINGER.

South Bend, Ind.

Hands Raised.

BY J. W. BEER.

A pupil raises his hand to signify that he is ready to answer a question. Sometimes he thinks he is prepared when he is not, but the teacher is always glad to see the hand raised. I raise both my hands, not as a sign of distress or horror, but to show that I am now ready to answer two questions. If I fail, I hope the querists will, at least, be pleased with my effort.

I. DOCTRINE AND CUSTOM.

Bro. Bauman asks, "Who will instruct us . . . on the proper method to distinguish between apostolic custom and apostolic doctrine?"

Ans.—"Apostolic doctrine" is what the apostles taught as from the Lord. "Apostolic custom" is twofold: (1.) a faithful observance of the requirements of the gospel; and (2.) conformity to the usages or wishes of others, in things not conflicting with the gospel, when, by so doing, there was a likelihood of gaining something for Christ. The first of these classes of "apostolic custom" was permanent, being a part of the gospel of Christ, which is unchangeable; the second ceased with the exigency.

II. BRO. HOLSINGER ON CONVENTION.

"What is the object of the Convention?"

Ans.—To get into a position to do more and better work for Christ.

We are a church, a body, a brotherhood, and have assumed a name, which is THE BRETHREN CHURCH.

This "one body" is composed of "many members," and the Lord is adding "to the church daily such as should be saved." These members, for the most part, are organized into local churches; as The Brethren Church at South Bend, Ind., The Brethren Church at Ashland, Ohio.

We have a Bond of Union—the gospel of Christ. This is all the bond of union we need or should have; but it is the privilege of the "one body," assembled, to make a summary statement of the distinguishing features of The Brethren Church. Such a

summary is altogether in keeping with our Bond of Union, and would be of great service to the church. We have it in fact, and we ought to have it in printed form.

The coming convention will be, properly speaking, a National Convention of the Brethren Church, because it was called by the National Executive Committee of the Brethren Church. But as we have no churches outside of this nation, it will be, also, in reality, a General Conference of The Brethren Church.

All the members of the body can not attend the Convention; but as all are interested, they should be represented, in some way. It is expected, therefore; that, as far as it is possible, the churches shall be represented by messengers. It is not necessary that there should be more than one messenger from each church; but all business sent by any messenger should be carefully written out as it stands on the minute book, and signed by the clerk, by order of the church. The messenger should also have a letter, signed in the same way, to certify that he is sent to represent the church in the Convention.

The churches are not prohibited by the gospel or by any conventional regulation, and, therefore, they may send up letters, queries, petitions, and even remonstrances. If, therefore, there is anything you want to know, send up your query; if anything you want the Convention to do, send your petition; if anything you want it not to do, send your remonstrance; and if you have nothing else, you can send a good messenger to help in the work, and a short letter setting forth the condition of the church and its interest in the Convention.

If churches cannot represent by messengers, they ought to represent by letter; and isolated members may attend or send letters setting forth their condition and wants, or offer any suggestions that they may feel to make. Letters should be short.

The great work of the Convention will be to formulate a system of mutual co-operation in all general church work. The local churches can take care of their own local interests, and the convention should not be burdened or troubled with such matters. All local matters will either be respectfully returned or discarded—not tabled.

The Convention will be limited only by the gospel, and will respect all proper calls of churches or members.

In Conference any member may speak, and, peradventure, be assigned to committee work, but the messengers will cast the determining vote.

It is too late now to arrange to hold district meetings (as Bro. Bauman intimates,) but the churches ought to be at work. Now is the preparation.

If any one wishes to know by what authority I speak, my answer is, by the authority of a member of the body of Christ, or, in other words, by authority of my inalienable gospel rights.

Lanark, Ill., May 5th, 1887.